

## CHAPTER 5

### THE OLD VESSEL

That Saturday Paloma had gone alone to the market to buy groceries. She didn't like to go alone, but since Marga began the diet didn't want to accompany her. She adduced that she found too much temptations and that the best was to don't go.

«You know –she always said very serious like a professor giving an important lesson– eyes that don't see, heart that doesn't feel».

All that nonsenses seem to Paloma, in order to be not going to buy and could be alone in the house and jump the diet. But she was smarter than Marga and had closed everything with padlocks, even the kitchen door. Only think of Marga trying to open the door made appear a wicked smile in her face.

When she arrived to the house she called to Marga so that she helps her with the bags of purchase, but she didn't answer. Paloma thought that she would be in the garden, but she there was not. She entered at home and she got on her room: neither



Paloma surprised to she didn't see her and an alarm lit in her head: THE KITCHEN.

Like a ray she went until there and she observed that the padlock was broken. She entered and she saw Marga handling something in the kitchen.



–CATCH!!!!!!– shouted Paloma

–Shit, what fright! –Marga said with the heart hitting deep down.

–I knew that you could not be more than three days on a diet –Paloma said with anger face.

–I was here washing a few plates– Marga answered with a false smile while she thought «I hope her to don't realize the pastry that I have

made with leaves of marijuana How could I hide it?».

–For if you have not realized, the sink is one meter of you. So... o you has changed the decoration of the kitchen, or you are so good with the magic like Harry Potter –she said while she looked at Marga like a mother look at the son that has just made a mischief.

–Mmm... You see... that... it's a surprise... I have made a pastry for you... because...

–A pastry! –She said with face of astonishment –Do you have remembered that did I have to make a pastry for my friends of old people's home? –Pigeon said with malice

«How real bastard!» Marga thought



–I was going to take them only some bottles of liquor, but now we will take them also the cake that with so much love has been making me –she said smiling of ear to ear.



«Witch!» Marga thought.

–Or maybe this pastry was for you? For that if it is so I remember you that we bet us the money of a month of the pension to that you would continue with the diet for two weeks – Paloma said with a grave tone– It has only passed a week and it's a long time until finish the second. LADY

«It makes me want to slap his face. I will play along with her, until I know what to do with the pastry of marijuana. But this won't sniff neither one of my euros» Marga thought.

–Then? –said Paloma, staking out that of her thoughts.

–Of course it is for your friends («witch»). I also wanted to go with you in order to know them («boring as you, old») How better mode of introducing me, that take them this delicious pastry –Marga said with soft voice but with a volcano of fury deep down.

–That's good, Marga! We are going to ready because we soon will go there.

Satisfied with the result of the conversation Paloma left from the kitchen. Both went to get ready in order to go to the old people's home to know the Paloma's dear friends.



Dressed already for the occasion, they were sat in the car.

Inside it the scene was atypical, because the person that normally was grave was cheerful like a castanets and the person that normally was happy was serious like a stick.



The tension could be felt in the atmosphere. Paloma knew it and for this enjoyed so much of the moment.

«How I like to torment her!» Paloma laughed deep down.

But also she wanted to help her. She knew what it was costing to her friend to continue the diet and if Paloma was hard with her would get that Marga arrives the goal wished.

When they arrived to old people's home they met with a place totally paws up: Thrown gavels, garbage everywhere, spotted in the walls...

Any of them could believe what they saw. It seemed that a battle had happened.

Upon leaving from the car they saw all the residents cleaning and repairing the zone: Ana and Tane got ready the plants. Jeff picked up the garbage. Gerardo and Agus cleaned the walls of the spotted.



–What does it have happened here? –Paloma said helping Jeff to pick up the garbage.

–A sons of... –Ana began to say.

–Some hooligans have been a week annoying

–Agus said– This that you see happen every days.

–We are fed up with this –Tane said with tired voice– It make that I feel so useless.

–Those bastar...–Ana began to say.

–Finish with this in order to attend Paloma and her friend like they deserve –Gerardo end up.



They finished cleaning and everyone entered in the house. Marga, without releasing the pastry, and Paloma went into the living, while the rest was cleaned.

–You could put it on the table –Paloma said– because it won't leave from here

–I am looking after it so that it doesn't cool down.–Marga answered.

–But, what do both standing??. Sit down, please –Tane said

And she approached Marga in order to catch the cake, but Marga turned round in order to avoid that she subtract it. Exactly when she rotated appears Ana that hold the tart for the other side. The two were looked at to the eyes without releasing the cake



–I put the tart on the table –Ana said

–No, I look after it a little more –Marga said.

And the two began to throw until Ana, that is very warring, succeeded in catching it and put it on the table. Then Agus, Gerardo and Jeff arrived with the drinking glass, the liquor and some plates where serving the cake.

-Well, we planned to abandon this home, if everything continues like this -Jeff said with sadness- We like this place, but we didn't support this situation. Also, we are weak and could not face to them.

-Yes -Agus said- With my backs ache how could I face to one of those hooligans?. He breaks me for the half



-Also, we are losing money because we should repair the damage that they make - Gerardo said- We don't know what do.

-I think that the first that you need -Paloma began to say- is go up the spirit, and... How better way that eating this rich tart! Jejeje... Permit, Tane, already I distribute it.

-Of course -Marga said very harsh- How the proverb says "the one that part and distribute..."

-Here you have -Paloma said giving the penultimate piece to Ana- Fancy that! It only is left a piece What pity!!.-she said with false grief and added very seriously although her glance said the opposite- As Marga is on a diet and keeps it strictly, I will eat this piece for her. Oh! What I have to make for the friends. Later I will tell you a story.

Everyone began to eat the tart. Paloma looked at Marga delighting with each piece that ate: "Mmmm, how delicious!", "it is very good!", "Delicious!". To each mouthful that Paloma gave, Marga was more and more furious



«How hypocrite is this old»– Marga thought angry– «With the work that found difficult me to cook my dear tart with pot. Witch! »

When everyone finished eating, an enormous silence in the room took place.

–How extraordinary!! –Jeff said, suddenly– It's the best cake that I ate in long time..

–That is true, friend – Tane replied.



–More tart, more tart, more tart..! –Agus began to sing suddenly.

–I want more, I want more, I want more..! – Ana said while ate the crumbs that remained in all the dishes.

–MORE TART, MORE TART, MORE...! –all the residents sang while they danced around the table

– JAJAJÁ –Marga laughed– I die laughing

Paloma was like absent-minded, quiet, silent while the others got excited. Suddenly she said screaming:

–NOR TART NEITHER PASTRY, SHIT!! Sit down everyone to listen my story– Later as if nothing has passed, she sat down and said– Now, boys and girls, you will hear my story of today entitled "The old vessel" Sit down

Everyone looked at amazed when she said again –SHUT UP, NOW!! –Said this, everyone sat down and was quiet listening to what she had to say.



## THE OLD VESSEL



*Tell the Indian legend that a man transported water every days to his village using two big vessels, hold in the extremities of a wooden piece that placed lying crosswise on his backs.*

*One of the vessels was older that the other, and it had small cracks; every time that the man travelled the path until his house, half of the water got lost.*

*For two years the man walked the same itinerary. The youngest vessel always was very proud of its performance, and it had the certainty that it was to the measure up of the mission for which it had been created, while, the other died of embarrassment because a hardly it executed*

*half of its job, even knowing that those cracks was the fruit of much time of work.*

*It was so embarrassed that one day, while the man got ready in order to take out water of the well, it decided to speak with him:*

*—I want to apologize me because, due to my long use, you only succeed in giving half of my load, and satiate half of the thirst to the people that await in your house.*



*The man smiled and said it:*

*—When we return, you please observe the path carefully.*

*So it did. The vessel noticed that, through the side where it went, many flowers and plants grew.*

*–Do you see like the nature is more beautiful through the side that you travel? –Said the man–. I always knew that you had cracks, and I decided to take advantage of this fact. I sowed flowers and vegetables, and you have watered them always. I already gathered many roses in order to adorn my house; I fed my children with lettuce, cabbage and onions. If are not you as you are, how could I do it?*



*«All we, in any moment, age and acquired other qualities. It is always possible take advantage of each one of these new qualities in order to obtain a good result»*

Paulo Coelho. Published by “El Semanal”, n° 729

Finished the story was made another silence that was broken again by Paloma that said:

–And.. that's the end of the story!. Come on boys.. It's break time

Said this she fell like unconscious on the armchair where she was and began to sleep



–Shit, that boys are really pissed! –Marga said looking at all them, while I continued laughing– And Pigeon... Huff, that bad did her the marijuana! Who was going to say!

–How speak Paloma! She begins and doesn't finish, God –Agus said.

–Does anyone have understood what she has told? –Tane asked.

–I have not understood anything, I only felt

like a hammering all the time –Jeff commented– Thank goodness that it has stopped!

–What we needed are less words and more action. We are going to ready us to receive the enemy! –Ana said with murderous glance– Let's annoy to those hooligans. Everyone go to the kitchen!

–Jejeje... "The golden children" in action – Marga laughed– I will unite to them to enjoy



In the kitchen they were distributed the actions: Jeff, retired veterinarian, would take charge of the surprise in the cubes of garbage; Ana and Agus prepared the plants of the garden; Tane and Gerardo, the most creative, took charge of the walls of the house.

Marga loved help to these because, with the drug, they had thought of a brilliant idea.

When night was made of, everything was finished and everyone was hidden waiting for that the hooligans come. They didn't take long. They, with secret step, approached to paint in the walls when they saw that the walls were painted already.

–Bloke, look at! Somebody has anticipated us and has painted the wall. See it!. It is a leaf of pot.

–Shit, they have annoyed us the spotted! We will throw them the plants and the flowerpots. Come on!



There they went, but they could not throw them because the plants were fix to the floor with cement and they couldn't move. Also there was much cactus for what they could not take out those of the flowerpot without chopping the hands.

–Bloody hell!! These old thinks that they could impede that have a good time us. We are going to give them a lesson!

Very furious they approached to the cubes of garbage in order to throw them and spread the garbage. But, just to open the cube, some enormous red ants began to cover the bodies of the hooligans.

–Guy, but... What there was in that filthy cube? What go up to me for the arm?

–Shit! Red ants... And how they chop... I can't bear to stay here.

–Gee up! Let's go from here!

And one went running. While, some grandparents and the grandmother Marga began to dance and sing. And while, the grandmother Paloma continued snoring like a truck driver.

